THE PORT FOLIO,

(NEW SERIES)

BY OLIVER OLDSCHOOL, ESQ.

Various;—that the mind
Of desultory man, studious of change,
And pleas'd with novelty, may be indulg'd.
COWPER.

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ORIGINAL PAPERS.

MISCELLANY.

For The Port Folio.

THE PLANETS.

No. V.

To lash the errours of a vitious age,
Support the honest, vindicate the brave,
Condemn the guilty, and the noble save
From Faction's fury and from party rage,
Should be th' employment of a pen divine:
But since the ablest scorn a contest low,
Whence little good and many evils flow,
Th edanger, credit of the task, be mine.

HAD Phæton been half as well conducted by the fire-breathing horses of his sire, as I was by the "sightless couriers" of the heavens, he might have driven without danger over the scorpion's stings, and braved the fury of the whole Zodiack.* I saw the lustre of the Galaxy diminish with my approach†; the distant stars that had appeared but tapers faintly glimmering in the firmament, assume the magnitude and brilliancy of suns of fire; the constellations, that we are wont to regard as animals the most contemptible, become collections of immeasurable orbs; and blazing comets securely wheel their rapid flight through fields of ether. When I call to mind these elevating scenes, which no mortal but myself has ever witnessed, I cannot but feel ineffable contempt for the littlenesses of the world below.

Spirits of all the astronomers prior, or posterior to the flood, whether Pagan, or Christian, or Mahometan (exclaimed I, as I viewed with wonder the burnished orbs, that glittered in splendid majesty around) genii of Newton, of Thales, of Meton, and not less of you, ye illustrious Chinese, Hongti, Confucius, and Tsheoucong, hover round me and blush at the superiority of my knowledge over that which you possessed, so feeble, so circumscribed! Gather round me all ye mighty shades, and learn how faint were the perceptions you enjoyed of the gravitations, the aphelions, the precessions, and the occultations of the system, you contemplated darkly through the medium of your deceptive instruments! I called, but I called in vain: no responsive voice answered to my invitation, no admir-

* "Nec tibi quadrupedes animosos ignibus illis,
Quos in pectore habent, quos ore, et naribus efflant
In promptu regere est."

† Many and subtle have been the disputes about the milky way. Aristotle supposed that it was composed of thicker parts of orbs, Democritus, of inhabitable worlds. My friend has ascertained that it is a mere highway from star to star.

ing eye witnessed my delight. Seneca! said I, thou art right; the joys of heaven themselves would soon become vapid, without a participator in their fruits!

The serenity of Jupiter is perfectly emblematick of the heathen deity he represents.‡ He knows no change. The same perpetual calmness of the air endures forever. No seasons shed their varied influences to disturb the tranquillity that universally and eternally prevails.§ The distance of the Sun precludes excessive heat, and in his absence four moons diffuse a silver light, whose effects are in nothing different. Thus one moment is eternity: for the same breezes ever blow, the temperature of the air never changes, and the hours glide along in one unruffled course.‖ It may be supposed that I could not repress my astonishment at this serenity of a whole world; that amidst so many myriads of beings, whose faculties and perceptions did not seem superiour to ours, every eye appeared to brighten each moment with delight, every brow was cloudless, every countenance was perpetually enlivened with the cheerful smile of contentment.¶ "What," said an enlightened Jovian, "can this surprise you? Come with me, and I will show you legislatures without folly, mobs without passion, officers without arrogance, women without vanity, rich without pride, and poor without envy. Follow me to yonder temple, and you will see priests labouring for the benefit of mankind, and governours consulting how best to promote the happiness of their people."

His wonder equalled my own, when I informed him that any one of these would be regarded as impossible on earth. But nothing can equal his astonishment when I represented the disputes of individuals, the rancour of parties, and the bitter feuds of nations. "Surely," said he, "you must live forever, or else so clear are your perceptions of eternity, and so great your abhorrence for your present existence, that you long to explore the depths of futurity." With shame I answered No! A few short years only do we enjoy on earth, and fearfully we enter into worlds unknown. "Is your life then," replied he, "strewed with ever-blooming flowers, so that you must make an exertion to vary the evenness of tranquillity and diversify its course? Tell me, I beseech you, the nature of your employments."

The cares of nations, I proceeded, are forever employed in guarding with jealous circumspection against the trifling encroachments of their neighbours, or if their ability extend so far, in trampling on the rights of others. Within themselves, divisions are made, termed parties, whose animosities are inflamed, by subtle poisons conveyed through the medium of the eyes to the very heart itself, in the shape of falsehoods, calumnies, and slanders, spread over an extent of paper, and artfully prepared and gilded so as to meet the eye, without at first exciting disgust. The instruments in this work of infamy are potent dæmons, whose *profession* is slander, and falsehood whose delight. These generally appear disguised in the cloak of patriotism, their garments composed of variegated shreds, on each of which is imprinted some deceptive motto, as *the rights of man*,

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‡ Not, I presume, the Jupiter of Horace, "rubente dextra," but the
— hominum sator atque deorum,
Vultu, quo cœlum, tempestatesque serenat,
of the Mantuan bard.

§ Ovid must have been mistaken in representing Saturn's as the golden age. The "aurea proles" seems to have its residence under the reign of Jupiter.

‖ How such a state would deprive us of our accustomed conversation! The amiable and very ingenious substitute for silence is now some sage remark on the last change of wind.

¶ These inhabitants of Jupiter would seem to have taken the advice of Voltaire's hermit,
Fuyez d'un doux poison, l'amorce enchanteresse
Craignez vos passions, et sachez quelque jour
Resister aux plaisirs.

the publick good, or *candour and sincerity:* but within their bosoms, they always conceal legions of devils, and over their whole body they extend a brazen shield, on which is inscribed, too often in characters of blood—THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS. Their poisons are taken with avidity, because they are soothing for a moment to envy, hatred, and malignity,* but they never fail to increase the disorders they were intended to cure. Should any one arise peculiarly great and good, his excellence itself will entail on him the calumny of his fellow citizens. Banishment has been inflicted on the just, death on the virtuous, only because they were preeminently just and virtuous.† Are we republicks? Such are our evils. In other governments the influence of the strong destroys the happiness of the weak—In this strain was I proceeding when an exclamation from my companion arrested me. "Why do you speak," said he, "of different kinds of government? Surely you place in the hands of the wisest and the best the administration of your affairs, and then, call them what you will, the felicity of the people will be secure, will be always the same."‡ "Delightful delusion! (continued I) would to heaven it could be realized! but fatally false is the belief. The noisiest brawler is the ablest statesman, the most visionary theorist is the favourite politician, and the bitterest foe to the interests of his country carries with him the greatest influence. I spring from a republick Our rulers of the day basking for a moment in the bright sunshine of the nation's love, hang upon their smiles, and basely court their favour and support. The bright god of their idolatry is popularity: this is the polar star on which their affections are ever placed, by which they are ever guided; this directs them to neglect the improvement of art and advancement in science; this interposes between them and duty, and with a frown annihilates every good design; this directs submission to insult, and arrests the career of glory." The smiles of my companion now became converted into a frown; and assuming a serious air he thus addressed me:

"Wretched race! blessed if you were wise, but cursed with folly! Avoid an intercourse with all here, lest you communicate your venom. Fly! fly from these now happy realms, or you may, by describing vices which had never been imagined, provoke an imitation; there may be dormant fires in our bosoms which if enkindled will involve us all in ruin."

I stole away, blushing for my fellow mortals, and escaped as soon as possible, fearing to corrupt the purity of this blissful region.

For The Port Folio.

Human nature is rational, as every body says, and as we are all disposed to believe; but like many other common observations, the remark is rather made from custom than conviction.

Authority, or general opinion, when it favours our partiality, to ourselves, is not apt to be called in question; and it is very natural to embrace all the pleasure that it affords, under the pretext of a respectful acquiescence, rather than endanger so delicate a subject by a rigorous examination.

I would not, however, have it understood that I mean to controvert so established a maxim, but merely to make some remarks on the imperfection of this ambitious character.

When I consider how much of the little I know I took upon trust; and

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* — No might nor greatness in mortality
Can censure 'scape: back-wounding calumny,
The whitest virtue strikes. What King so strong
Can tie the gall up in the sland'rous tongue?

† Witness the fate of Aristides and Socrates.

‡ The opinion is not singular. Mr. Pope has happily expressed it,
For forms of government, let fools contest,
That which is best administer'd is best.

how much of my conduct is rather the effect of habit than rational determination; and when I find other people to be generally in the same predicament—when I find that passion prompts and prejudice modifies, even the most serious business of human life, I must acknowledge that my *reasoning pride* drops its plumes, and, like the merchant who is obliged to make some unwelcome discoveries in the state of his affairs, I am anxious to know the amount of all these drawbacks, that if indeed there should be any balance, I may know how much I am still worth in clear, sterling reason.

But even this calculation is too laborious, and I shall only attempt to form some notions of the rebate that the human understanding is subjected to, on account of prejudice; by which I mean opinions derived from education, society, or particular situations; which upon examination are found to be irrational and absurd: and I am persuaded that I shall obtain the reader's assent to the fact without any argumentation; for every one is ready to lament the folly of all mankind, except himself; and will enjoy the satire or the censure that may be exercised upon it, with entire complacency, as long as he conceives himself to be out of the scrape.

Ut nemo in sese tentat descendere; nemo:
Sed precedenti spectatur mantica tergo.

What has become of the opinions of the fourteenth century, even upon those subjects, which men were wont to whet their wits upon? Alas! they are buried in silence, or mentioned only as monuments of human fallibility. Is it not strange that the learning of several ages should consist in what is now conceived to be unintelligible jargon?—What if some future generation should repay us the compliment?

We conceive of nothing rightly from the mere mention of it. Mention Europe, Lombardy, Stonehenge, or the Rhine, to a child, or any person, not previously acquainted with those names, and he would form an idea for each of them, but how unlike the reality! If any person would compare his ideas of places thus acquired with the representations of Geography, and proceed in the same manner to review his notions of persons, characters, institutions, and whatever has not been an immediate object of his senses, he would see what a dream is human knowledge, and that whatever faculties we may boast, we are very little acquainted with the reason of things. This sort of knowledge is not worthy of the name; and as it is made up of notions conceived in the absence of judgment and fostered by a blind partiality, I take the liberty to call it prejudice.

Reason is one and unchangeable, and we should infer thence that mankind would agree in their judgment of things; and unquestionably they would, if that judgment were properly conducted.

But argument is lost, clashing is the life of the world. In the church, orthodoxy is opposed to orthodoxy; and in civil society, a scheme of government cannot be proposed without dividing the people into Guelphs and Gibellines, or at least into federalists and antifederalists.

The monarchist speaks of republicanism as a sort of knight-errantry that furnishes the world with much more disturbance than happiness, and the republican, to punish his blasphemy in one word, pronounces him a slave. On these subjects, they respectively come forward, not only with zeal but with ingenuity, and discover abilities in contending for a certain favourite theory, which if they had been seasonably employed in distinguishing true and false principles, would have prevented that original discrepancy which occasioned all the bustle. Their first determinations would have been rational, and therefore consistent; whereas those fortuitous notions or prejudices, which upon various occasions were first permitted to occupy the vacant mind, being independent of one another, and unconnected by any common cause, are forever discordant and irreconcilable.

Mathematical certainty is proverbial. It seems, the principles of that

sort of knowledge are definite and self-evident. He who denies or disputes them is too absurd to deserve a confutation; and all who reason upon them strictly, agree in their principles, and draw the same conclusions. Hence this branch of learning is exempted from controversy, and pre-eminently owes its cultivation to the love of truth; for its principles are not prejudices, but simple truths: but in almost every other study or profession, even so important a one as that of morality, the proficient must fight his way—must manage his steps as he can through endless files of cavil and contradiction.

No wonder authours owe much of their fame to the singularity of their theories or rather to the oddity of their prejudices—with one, the moral sense is the root of the matter; to another nothing seems so likely as benevolence to originate all the duties of social life, and a third imagines that they may be better explained by the consideration of actual relations, without the assistance of either. Thus are they determined in the first instance by fancy or some accident, and then it will not be in the power of reason itself to cure the system of the original taint. They spin their webs out of incoherent stuff, and they cannot be either sound or entire. Their reason was constrained to dignify a prejudice; and if it failed in a task so difficult and so irksome, they may blame the folly that imposed it.

In physick and divinity I am sorry to observe that theory varies with the age, and that two of the most respectable professions in civil society are as much a subject of fashion as a lady's head-dress. The learned practitioner can tell what system it was that, with a good deal of patching, held out till Boerhaave made a new one, and how Cullen luckily prepared another by the time that Boerhaave's grew threadbare, and that now Cullen himself must give place to something newer, which, while it is new, I suppose will do as well as the rest. So is human life measured out by a succession of prejudices, and so are we destined to dance about after a phantom that "leads to bewilder, and dazzles to blind."

It would seem that prejudices take faster hold of the mind than truth, for they are maintained more pertinaciously, and defended with more warmth: whether it be that their affinity to the passions of the human heart makes them seem important to our happiness, or whether that their questionable shape and mein exposes them to more contradiction. People neither quarrel nor fight in defence of any geometrical proposition, but torrents of blood have been shed to establish the doctrine of transubstantiation—they can insist upon the expediency of divine worship with temper, but if the doctrine of predestination is brought upon the carpet, the conversation immediately kindles into contest. Whence I infer that intemperate zeal in any cause implies want of argument, and he that is not willing to trust his opinion to the issue of a fair discussion, is rather a stickler for his own prejudices than an advocate for truth.

But I must not conclude this speculation without remarking, that prejudices are not universally at variance with truth or with the true interests of society. Even demonstrable truths are frequently prejudices in relation to the mind that has been early imbued with them, and, of course affected with a veneration for them that supercedes any further proof. And as prejudices sometimes coincide with truth, we must also acknowledge that in some instances they are favourable to virtue and humanity. The story of "The Babes in the Wood" has made the red-breast an object of friendly partiality, and so far checked the wanton depredations of mankind upon the lower orders of animal life—the notion of a dead body's bleeding afresh upon being touched by the murderer, adds a horribleness to that crime, that may, in some instances, have prevented the commission of it; and the man in the moon may have taught the tender mind to beware of sabbath-breaking: So that among the

infinitude of mischievous prepossessions which trouble the affairs of human life, we have the satisfaction to find some that compensate the affront that they offer to our reason with a seasonable influence on our moral disposition.

For The Port Folio.

One of the most celebrated literary ladies of Ireland, is Miss Sidney Owenson, advantageously known to the lovers of romances by her novels of The Wild Irish Girl and The Novice of St. Dominick. These volumes, written in a very florid style, have been republished here, and almost rival in popularity the romances of Mrs. Smith. Our authouress has just published a volume of poems with the title of "The Lay of an Irish Harp." From this miscellany we have copied the following, which the polite reader will perceive is modelled from some of the minor poems of Burns. There is an archness and gayety in the ensuing stanzas which will divert many.

Old *Scotia's* jocund *Highland Reel*
Might make a hermit play the deel!
So full of gig!
Famed for its *Cotillions* gay *France* is;
But e'en give me the dance of dances,
An *Irish Jig*.1

The slow *Pas Grave*, the brisk *Coupee*,
The rigadoon, the light chassee,
Devoid of gig,
I little prize; a Saraband
Of Spain; or German Allemande:
Give me a Jig.

When once the frolick Jig's begun,
† Then hey for spirit, life, and fun!
And with some gig.
Trust me, I too can play my part,
And dance with all my little heart
The Irish Jig.

Now through the mazy figure flying,
With some (less active) partner vying,
And full of gig.
Now warm with exercise and pleasure,
Each pulse beats wildly to the measure,
Of the gay Jig.

New honours to the Saint be given,‡
Who taught us first to *dance* to heaven.
I'm sure of gig,
And laugh, and fun, his soul was made,
And that he often danced and played
An Irish Jig.

I think 'tis somewhere clearly proved,
That some great royal prophet loved
A little gig,
And though with warriour fire he glow'd,
The prowess of his *heel* he showed
In many a Jig.

Nay, somewhere too I know they tell
How a fair maiden danced so well,
With so much gig,
That (I can scarce believe the thing)
She won a *Saint's* head from a *King*,
For one short Jig.

But I (so *little* my ambition)
Will fairly own, in meek submission,
(And with some gig.)
That for no *holy* head I burn,

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1 This trifle is given as it was written, *impromptu*, in the first flush of triumph after having "simply gained renown" by tiring out two famous jig dancers at the seat of a particular friend in Tipperary. There are few countries whose inhabitants are strictly natives, that have not a national *dance* as well as a national *song*. "This must have peculiarly been the case in *Ireland*," says Noverre, in his essay on dancing, "for such a natural and native taste for musick as I have spoken of, is usually accompanied by, or includes in it, a similar one for dancing.

† The influence which an Irish Jig holds over an Irish heart is strongly illustrated in the following singular anecdote borrowed from the Appendix of Mr. Walker's interesting Memoir of the Irish Bards: "The farce of the Half-Pay Officer, having been brought out at the Drury Lane Theatre, the part of an old grandmother was assigned to Mrs. Tryer, an Irish woman, who had quitted the stage in the reign of Charles II, and had not appeared on it for fifty years; during the representation, she exerted her utmost abilities; when however she was called on to dance a Jig at the age of *eighty-five*, she loitered, and seemed overcome; but as soon as the musick struck up the *Irish Trot*, she footed it as nimbly as a girl of five and twenty.

‡ At Limoges not long ago the people used to dance round the choir of the church, which is under the invocation of the patron Saint, and at the end of each psalm, instead of the "Gloria Patria," they sang as follows: "Saint Marcel pray for us, and we will *dance* in honour of you.

One poor *lay* heart would serve *my* turn,
For well danced Jig.

Since then we know from "truths divine,"
That *Saints* and *Patriarchs* did incline
To *fun* and *gig*.
Why let us laugh and dance forever,
And still support with best endeavour,
THE IRISH JIG.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

For The Port Folio

CONRADS' AMERICAN REGISTER.

The enterprising booksellers of this name have in a state of great forwardness for publication a valuable work, entitled, "The American Register." This performance is upon a similar plan with Dodsley's Annual Register, and has long been wanted in this country, as none of the ephemeral productions of the press can possibly preserve all the valuable historical, state, and miscellaneous papers, to which every year gives birth. The useful repository which we have now in review, is edited by Mr. C. B. Brown, who has already distinguished himself in various walks of polite literature. The first part of his Register includes annals of Europe and America. This portion of his performance is entirely original; it is modelled after Burke's historical introductions, and it is written with great ability, and in a temper of the utmost moderation. In the form of a summary, a concise chronicle succeeds. A review of domestick and foreign literature, a copious collection of state papers both foreign and domestick, and various essays scientifick and classical, together with many other valuable articles, either useful or elegant, make up the volume.

From "the Annals of America" we select the exordium of the authour's tenth chapter. The style is honourable to him, and the sentiments will be extremely agreeable to his countrymen.

While Europe was thus laid waste by so many years of war, the United States of America remained in tranquillity. For more than twenty-two years, their internal peace had been disturbed by no commotions of any importance. Scarcely a life had been lost, or a cottage been demolished in any intestine feud or insurrection. Though divided by accidental circumstances, existing at their first settlement, into several independent states, unequal to each other in size, population, and riches, dissimilar in habits, manners, and interests, they had never quarrelled with each other; though obliged to undergo a thorough revolution in their government, this dangerous and critical experiment was conducted and completed without the drawing of a sword; though harbouring in their bosom a nation of slaves, whose bondage was exasperated by many extraordinary circumstances of hardship and cruelty, who were drawn into union with each other, and set in irreconcileable opposition to their masters, by the indelible tokens of feature and colour, and who were roused by the example of successful revolt in a neighbouring country, yet they have hitherto avoided the calamity of a servile war. The evils of internal dissension and rebellion, instead of approaching nearer, are every day removed to a greater distance; the gulf which divides the master and the slave is becoming gradually narrower, and the ties which bind together the various members of the nation multiply and strengthen by time.

During this period, the American nation has increased in numbers and opulence, in a degree far beyond any known example. This increase indeed, is the natural consequence of their local circumstances; but those who were unacquainted with any previous instance of increase on so large a scale, could not have imagined anything resembling that which the present age has witnessed in America.1 Twenty-two years

1 That an infant colony, settling in a fertile and wholesome country, previously unoccupied, should increase from fifty to a hundred persons, in twenty years, could easily be conceived by one that lived in the seventeenth century; but that, in the same circumstances, five millions should increase in the same time, to ten millions, is equally certain, yet the imagination of such an observer would be startled and rendered incredulous merely by the magnitude of the event. Though this rate of increase cannot be eternally progressive, yet, considering the condition of the people with regard to arts, manners, and government, and the actual extent of territory inland, it is not easy to set the due limits to it. We can discover no material obstacle to the continual extension of our settlements to the Pacifick Ocean, nor can the increase be less than

of prosperity have increased the population of the country from three millions to six millions. Each individual of the present generation is richer, is surrounded with more luxuries and comforts, than his ancestor. The increase, therefore, in money, stock, publick and private revenue, and trade, is augmented in more than a double proportion. The imagination might easily pursue the various consequences of this two-fold increase, in the additions made to the quantity of cultivated land; to the number and size of cities, towns, and villages; to the number, extent, and excellence of roads; and to the quantity of shipping. It might dwell on the improvements in the structure and economy of cities and buildings, and in dress and furniture; on the improvements in the art of navigation; on the extension of the sphere or theatre of trade and commerce; on the diffusion of literature and science; and on the increase of military strength. In contemplating these in their actual state, compared with their condition at the peace of 1783, the change would appear like the effect of magick; nor would a plain account of them obtain credit with a distant observer, till he had thoroughly reflected on the unavoidable effects of an increase in population, from three millions to six, in so short a period as twenty-two years, an increase connected, at the same time, with an evident increase of individual opulence, refinement, and luxury. These effects are magnificent, and strike the imagination with wonder in proportion as the number doubled is small or great. A colony of five hundred can only enlarge itself, in twenty years, to a thousand; consequently these twenty years are employed in furnishing additional food, clothing, and dwelling only to five hundred persons; but a nation of three millions, increasing in twenty years to six, these twenty years are obliged to furnish additional clothing, diet, and habitation for three millions of persons.†

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double in every twenty years, till the whole be occupied, in the proportion of at least a hundred to a square mile. Supposing therefore, that there is only three millions of square miles of good land, connected with good climate, on both sides of the Mississippi, our numbers, in a hundred and ten years hence (little more than the life of some men), must be *three hundred millions*. Two hundred millions would people this space only in the small proportion of sixty-six to a square mile. Mighty and gigantick as this increase is, the reader must remember that the increase that has actually taken place would equally have startled a follower of William Penn, or a member of the Plymouth company.

Barlow's Columbiad.

A new epick poem, entitled The Columbiad, in ten books, by Joel Barlow, will shortly be published by C. and A. Conrad, in a splendid quarto. This work will be ornamented with twelve engravings, from original paintings, by English artists of the first celebrity. The typographical part, which is wholly American, is executed in a manner highly creditable to the persons employed. The paper is from the manufactory of Amies, the types from the foundery of Binny and Ronaldson, and the printing is executed by Messrs. Fry and Kammerer, with uncommon taste and elegance.

A work, like this, on a great *national subject*, will excite great curiosity; and the publishers flatter themselves that it may be deemed not only a monument of American genius, but a proof of the rapid progress of the arts, in the metropolis of our empire.

Bradford's edition of Dr. Rees's New Cyclopedia.

The indefatigable proprietor of this American edition of a very popular and useful performance, has, with

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† It is evident that this source of curiosity and wonder will go on rapidly increasing for at least another century. We have witnessed certain changes in the last twenty years; but those of the ensuing twenty must be double these in magnitude and importance; and the third period of twenty years will witness changes four times greater, in extent and consequence, than those of the first. The increase, indeed, will be much greater than this, because we have good reason to believe that individual opulence, luxury, and refinement, will go on increasing in quite as great a proportion. While numbers are only doubled, the mass of general wealth will be more than doubled. The city whose population shall have doubled, will have more than doubled its former size, because the new house will be more spacious and magnificent than the ancient one, and the new created street will not only be twice as long as the old, but much superiour in all other respects.

great diligence, reached the first part of the sixth volume. The interest of this work seems to increase as we proceed. The biographical articles, though brief, are extremely amusing, and to the scientifick departments it is evident that much important and local light is given from no ordinary source. The work is certainly well edited, and proofs of much ingenuity, as well as great industry are by no means wanting. In the typographical department, Mr Carr has attained to neatness, and in a work of this kind it is needless to aspire to splendour. The paper is manifestly *much better* than that employed, either in London or Paris, on similar occasions. The plates are *superiour* to the British engravings. The west door of the Cathedral of Carrara by Tiebout, and the figures by Murray and others, illustrative of Ornithology and Natural History, are executed with uncommon beauty and spirit. The whole work deserves that generous patronage, with which, we understand, it is very generally favoured.

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DE BORDES' Edition of DODSLEY'S ECONOMY OF HUMAN LIFE, with a collateral version into French.

J. M. De Bordes, Professor of the French language, has published an elegant translation of Dodsley's most popular work. This translation is reputable to the Professor, and will be useful to his pupils. The following testimonies are from respectable French instructors resident in Philadelphia. It is lamentable that our authour did not employ some *Englishman* to correct the preface.

To Mr. De Bordes, Professor of the French Language.

SIR,

I have often and with renewed pleasure perused your elegant, yet faithful translation of the Economy of Human Life by Dodsley. An advantage (far more important than that of comparing the phraseology of the two languages, in order to ascertain the difference of their genius, and of the taste of the two nations) will be derived from your edition, viz. the diffusion of sound morals and precepts among those who understand French, to which your beautiful and animated version of a work which might with propriety have been entitled "The Honest Man's Manual," will powerfully contribute.

I make no doubt but the booksellers in Paris will be eager to add your production to their stock of translations from foreign literature, and that it will meet with the universal applause of men of letters.

With every wish for your success, I remain very respectfully,

Sir,

Your most humble,
and most obedient servant,
N. G. DUFIEF.

Philadelphia, 20th October.

Philadelphia, October 18th, 1807.

MR. DE BORDES,

Dear Sir,

I have perused with the greatest satisfaction your French translation of a work entitled The Economy of Human Life.

Permit me, sir, to pay you my most unfeigned compliments for your having enriched our language with so valuable a treatise of morality. Your translation is elegant, bold, and imitative of the sublimity of the original; your style as chaste as the subject itself. I am of the opinion that, independently of its merit, as an instructive work of morality, it might be very useful in the hands of the lovers of our language, who have a desire of becoming acquainted with its genius.

Wishing you all the success you so justly merit, I am, sir,

Very respectfully, yours,
L. C. VALLON.

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CONRADS' Edition of CARR'S TOUR THROUGH HOLLAND.

Sir John Carr, who appears to be a most resolute and persevering traveller, after amusing himself and others, by tours through France, rambles in Russia, and an excursion to Ireland, has, during the Summer and Autumn

of the last year, journied through Holland, along the right and left banks of the Rhine, to the south of Germany. It is the mode, among a certain class of criticks, to abuse our tourist, and many a joke has been published at his expense. On the whole, we think he has been in many instances treated with too much illiberality. Though he is not a profound, yet he is certainly a very amusing companion, and we have observed that the prosing and statistical class of travellers are the dullest fellows in the world. Although one would not look very eagerly for much entertainment in the description of the dull and monotonous country of "the swag bellied Hollander," yet the lively talents of our authour give interest even to Dutch canals and Dutch society. We have derived too, more information from this tour than from any other volume we have hitherto perused on the subject. Though written confessedly in great haste, yet it is not destitute of elegance, and will by no means detract from the rank the authour holds in the opinion of candid criticism.

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PELHAM'S NEW SYSTEM OF NOTATION.

Mr. W. Pelham, a very respectable bookseller, and a man of letters, has issued proposals at Boston for a new edition of Dr. Johnson's eloquent and moral "Rasselas," with a view to exhibit a novel mode of printing, by which, with the aid of a few marks, the variable sounds of the vowels and consonants in the English alphabet may be accurately distinguished. The ingenious authour's proposals, which we have inserted at length on the covers of The Port Folio, will more fully explain the nature of this laudable attempt. If Mr. Pelham can even partially accomplish a plan so desirable, as to simplify the alphabetical principles of our language, which, as a learned prelate has observed, are in some instances scanty and in others redundant, and which tend much to the confusion of foreigners in particular, he will render a most acceptable service to the republick of letters, and we cordially wish that he may prove successful and the publick kind.

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CONRADS' Edition of THE MODERN SHIP OF FOOLS.

Messrs. CONRAD have just published a quaint work, in the guise of a satire, with the following old-fashioned titlepage: "Stultifera Navis; qua omnium mortalium narratur stultitia. The Modern Ship of Fools ære perennius; with the following appropriate motto, "a whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back."

He, who is skilled in black-letter lore, or who has waded through the notes by Shakespeare's commentators, or peeped into the preface of Johnson's Dictionary, may remember divers allusions to a worm-eaten volume of the fourteenth century, entitled *The Shippe of Fooles*, translated into English by Alexander Barclay, a priest. This little volume, its successour, is a *melange* of prose and poetry, the intention of which is to lash the reigning vices and follies of mankind. Our authour's poetry is better than that of his predecessour, but still we cannot compliment him highly upon its merit. The notes are better than the text, and will pleasantly beguile a vacant hour. As this is a cheap edition, not much splendour of mechanical execution can be expected. On the whole, it is neatly printed by Fry and Kammerer, but in consequence of the Philadelphia *Jehu* style of *driving* a work with all possible velocity through the Press, some errours have escaped the vigilance of the proof-reader.

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Mr. William Spence, F. L. S. has in the press a work entitled "Britain Independent of Commerce." The object of this publication is to show, in opposition to the commonly received doctrines that Great Britain does not gain any accession of riches from her trade: that her wealth, prosperity,

and power are wholly derived from reasons inherent in herself, and consequently that she has no reason to be alarmed, though her enemies should succeed in their attemps to exclude her from commerce with any part of the globe.

VARIETY.

In the rough blast heaves the billow,
In the light air waves the willow;
Every thing of moving kind
VARIES with the veering wind:
What have I to do with thee,
Dull, unjoyous Constancy?

Sombre tale, and satire witty,
Sprightly glee, and doleful ditty,
Measur'd sighs, and roundelay,
Welcome all! but do not stay.
What have I to do with thee,
Dull, unjoyous Constancy?

The following epigram of the classical Fracastorius has so sharp a point that we wish ASMODEO would make it visible to the English reader.

DE LEONILLA ET LYDIA.

Me lætis Leonilla oculis, me Lydia torvis
Aspicit: hæc noctem nunciat, illa diem.
Has Cytherea meo stellas præfecit amore:
Hæc meus est Vesper, *Lucifer* illa meus.

The following is a very spirited if not a very just description of the artifice of a *belle coquette*.

Like thistle down, that, borne with every blast,
At random floats, and sticks where'er 'tis cast,
The maiden's wish o'er all the species roves,
'Tis not her lover, but a man she loves,
Plum'd for occasion, fluttering with desires,
She flies to sate the passion she inspires;
Hers are the freedoms of the midnight dance,
The squeeze, the whisper, and the meaning glance;
Hers sweet confusion, playful kitten arts,
The cobweb springes for unwary hearts,
The studied chance, where secret charms appear,
Alluring languors and enticing leer.

Pope, in his bitter satire on the sex thus describes female inconstancy:

Flavia's a wit, has too much sense to pray,
To toast "*our wants and wishes*" is her way,
Nor asks of God, but of her stars to give
The mighty blessing "while we live, to live,"
Then all for death, that opiate of the soul,
Lucretia's dagger, Rosamonda's bowl:
Say, what can cause such impotence of mind?
A spark too fickle, or a spouse too kind.

The origin of eating Goose on Michaelmass day.

Queen Elizabeth, on her way to Tilbury Fort, on the 29th of September, 1593, dined at the ancient seat of Sir Neville Umfreville, near that place; and as British Bess had much rather dine off a high-seasoned and substantial dish, than a flimsy fricasee, or a rascally ragout, the Knight thought proper to provide a brace of fine geese, to suit the palate of his royal guest. After the Queen had dined very heartily, she asked for a half pint bumper of Burgundy, and drank destruction to the Spanish Armada. She had but that moment returned the glass to the Knight, who had done the honours of the table, when the news came (as if the Queen had been possessed of the spirit of prophecy) that the Spanish fleet had been destroyed by a storm. She immediately took another bumper in order to digest the geese and good news; and was so much pleased with the event, that she every year after, on that day, had the above excellent dish served up; the court made it a custom, and the people have followed the fashion ever since.

Burke.—The splendid eloquence of Mr. Burke, has often been the theme of praise, and his great merit as a writer and oratour not only eulogized by his friends but his enemies. Mr. Hall, in his "Apology for the freedom of the Press," although his political adversary, yet disdaining to detract from merit through the malevolence of party motive, with the pencil of truth sketches his character in the following animated manner.

Polyanthos.

"He is a writer of the most splendid and unequal powers; the fascination and magick of his eloquence cannot be withstood. His Imperial fancy has laid all Nature under tribute, and has collected riches from every scene of creation, and every walk of art. His images are so select, so rich with

colours dipt in heaven, that whoever can read his works without rapture, may have merit as a reasoner, but must resign all pretensions to taste and sensibility."

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The following account of the number of copies said to be regularly sold of the principal London Magazines and Reviews, has lately appeared in several Journals and newspapers.

	Copies.
The Monthly Magazine,	5000
Monthly Review,	4250
Gentleman's Magazine,	3500
European Magazine,	3500
Lady's Magazine,	3000
Medical and Physical Journal,	2250
British Critick,	2000
Universal Magazine,	2000
Journal of New Voyages and Travels,	1500
Philosophical Magazine,	1250
Anti-Jacobin Review,	1250
Critical Review,	1250
Monthly Mirror,	1000
Nicholson's Journal,	1000

How striking is the contrast of the sale of similar publications in France, of the most popular of which, not more than 500 copies are regularly circulated. The periodical press of Germany is in better condition, 4000 copies being sold of the Jena Literary Gazette, and nearly as many of some other literary and scientifick Journals.

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

With mingled regret and indignation, the Editor has been recently apprized, from authentick authority in the North, that a report has been industriously propagated, and generally believed, which had induced many to assert, as a sort of axiom, that the property of The Port Folio had passed into other hands, and that for more than two years, the Editor had merely lent his name to assist the sale of that work. This rumour, false as well as injurious, must be instantly quelled, as dishonourable to the Editor's character, and pernicious to his property. He is the sole proprietor of this paper, of which, for years, he has had the absolute direction, and, if any emoluments arise from the subscription, the property is exclusively his. It is absolutely necessary to make this statement, because it is understood, *that* MANY *who would willingly patronize the work, have withheld their names, from a persuasion that they were only advancing the interest of some venal mechanick, who walked abroad with a vizor mask, disgracefully borrowed from the Editor.* It is presumed that to the men of honour and cavaliers among his subscribers, to the *real* friends of his paper and his party, and to those who have hourly opportunities of surveying his actions, and scrutinizing their motives, it is superfluous to declare from education, temper and habit, he is utterly incapable of an imposture so venal and flagitious. This for his friends. With respect to his foes, the fanaticks, the propagators of this story, however they may persevere in the malig-

nancy of their designs, or the audacity of their assertions, proofs shall be given, as long as The Port Folio is published, that the Editor is deeply interested in the work, that he writes habitually in that Journal, and that, if for no other purpose, he considers that paper his property, as affording him the means of ridiculing Absurdity, of chastising Faction, and of branding Hypocrisy.

It does not become the Editor, to dilate on the character of this Journal, or to court favour by the speciousness of professsion, or the magnificence of promise. His labour has for many years been before the publick, and if he has been censured by fanatick folly and party prejudice, he has been applauded and encouraged by the most venerable of his friends, and by a NESBIT, a GIFFORD and a REEVES; by a FATHER,—by a politician, a poet, and a divine. This is consolatory. In any fortune he will remember this and be comforted. In any fortune he will remember this, AND GO ON, without the *smallest compliance* with the *vagaries* of the *multitude*, and without THE LEAST CHANGE, OR SHADOW OF TURNING. So far from the remotest intention of relinquishing this Journal, or making it an object of sale and barter, he will continue to publish it upon THE MOST INDEPENDENT PRINCIPLES, while that POWER, who, at least has given him spirit, graciously indulges him with the use of his eyes, however dim, or his hand however unskilful.

The approbation, with which a gentleman whose signature is G, has honoured our humble labours in this Journal, is sufficient to requite the Editor. With such a philosopher for his friend, he cares not though Party Prejudice is his enemy. The Editor dreads nothing so much as the applause of the *common people*, and, whenever he hears a shout from the shambles, he remembers the following:

When Parmenio, the Grecian, had done something which excited a universal shout from the surrounding *multitude*, he was instantly struck that what had *their approbation must certainly be wrong;* and, turning to a philosopher, who stood near him, "Pray sir," says he, *pardon me;* I fear I have been *guilty* of *some absurdity*.

One of our friends, who to all the fancy and fire of a poet, adds delicacy of taste, and correctness of criticism, has favoured us with some very liberal remarks on the poems of Freneau.

Two poems, which our correspondent has indicated for publick approbation, we mean The Indian Burial Ground, and The Indian Student, or The Force of Nature, we published many years ago, in a country paper, but from very mutilated and deformed copies. We have now the satisfaction to exhibit these beautiful pictures in their proper light. For the *politicks* of the authour it is pretty well known that we have no peculiar partiality, but of the *poetry* of this versatile bard we must say that, by the

impartial, it will be, at length, considered as entitled to no ordinary place in a judicious estimate of American genius. As we are fully of our correspondent's opinion, we shall from time to time, publish such extracts as we think honourable to Freneau's muse. The specimens, which our friend has selected, have been, principally, sentimental. We cannot refrain from copying the following humorous effusion, a parody of Phillips's harmonious translation from Sappho.

TO A HANDSOME MILLINER.

"Blest as the immortal gods is he."

Cursed as a beggar's brat is he,
The unlucky wight who deals with thee,
Who still behind the counter sit,
To catch our cash, and show your wit.

Whate'er you prais'd, with sly design,
Whate'er you touch'd, I wish'd it mine,
And homespun trash from Nabby's paws,
In your fair hand was English gauze.

Twas this that drove Rinaldo mad
At times, and made him look so sad,
For ere he well could count the cost
His cash was gone, his credit lost.

His girls grew vain—their dress and show
Alas! soon brought his pockets low,
With India silks their shoes were bound,
The news went all the country round.

With constant duns his doors were vext,
His house with sheriffs was perplext,
His barber's bill he could not pay,
He blunder'd, broke, and ran away.

This is certainly an effort of Genius, and if it had been published in any English Miscellany, however respectable, it must have had the commendation of the Editor.

The Conductor of this Journal, apprizes the publick that a constant regard to elegant and useful literature will always be a distinguishing feature of this publication. Though, from the easy access he has to all the foreign Journals of merit, and from the interesting nature of many of their contents, he has both the power and inclination to describe the progress of Literature and Science abroad, yet Genius and Learning at home will challenge his regard. Every topick, connected with the refined and elegant pleasures of life will be occasionally discussed and as wide a space as possible assigned to original communications of value or of lustre.

The critical, biographical, and poetical departments will be sedulously superintended. The first from its powerful agency in reforming and refining taste, and the two last because they are, confessedly, among the purest pleasures of the studious hour, and always reward curiosity, amplify knowledge, or procure delight.

EDMUND BURKE took his seat in parliament in the year 1765, and his first speech was on the stamp act. It had all the elegance and fire of his maturer productions, and elicited the praise of Mr. Pitt, who then predicted the future greatness of this illustrious oratour. This speech was certainly preserved in some vehicle of the intelligence of the day. We hope to be indebted to some curious collector for a copy.

We have never yet seen *accurate* and *complete* reports of the harrangues of this oratour on the impeachment of Warren Hastings. However intemperate his language, however rash and angry his assertions, however defective his proofs on this memorable occasion, still the eloquence of his speeches attracted the admiration of the political, the fashionable, and the literary world. In this instance, Mr. Burke sedulously strove to emulate the most indigant style of Tully; and the immortal invectives of the Roman oratour against Verres, Cataline, Piso and Anthony were at that time constantly in his hands, during the intervals of his publick engagement. Copies, by such an imitator as BURKE, from such matchless originals will be highly valued by the Editor.

It is a circumstance much to be regretted, while so many heavy tomes of dullness are reposited in many a library, that any particle of the productions of Genius should be lost. We wish to apply this remark to many of the speeches, letters, and tracts of Mr. Burke, which have been strangely omitted in the new edition of his works. About the year 1780, he ad-

dressed a letter to Lord Kenmare, which was published in *Dublin*, and we believe never reprinted in London. As many of the Irish booksellers who resided in the capital, at that time, have since migrated to America, some of them undoubtedly have knowledge of the pamphlet. The Editor will acknowledge his obligations to any of these gentlemen, if they will furnish him with this letter.

The second article in this day's Journal, the excellent essay on Prejudice, is from the pen of a clergyman so respectable for his talents, that we sincerely hope he will keep his promise, oblige us with his speculations, and, with all the versatility of genius bound with a light step

From grave to gay, from lively to severe.

By some of the highly respectable trustees of a flourishing seminary in the state of New York, and by M. Du Bourg, principal of St. Mary's College Baltimore, we have been honoured with sketches of the plan and terms of their respective places of education. These articles shall have our marked attention. In the present state of our country, we feel it to be our duty to contribute our utmost aid to every liberal scheme of education. The worth, splendour and dignity of any nation, are in an exact ratio with the number of the MEN OF GENIUS, and the WELL EDUCATED GENTLEMEN, by whom it is adorned. To our eternal disgrace, be it spoken, we have neither a National University, nor a munificent Government, we have neither an Augustus Cæsar, nor a Caius Mæcenas, therefore it imports every lover of letters to lend his solitary assistance to the drooping Muses, and vindicate the literary renown of America.

A full description of Mr. Peale's valuable Museum, will soon appear, and the praise worthy proprietor of that useful and amusing collection of curiosities is requested to furnish the Editor regularly and *early* with catalogues of the additions, donations &c.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

For The Port Folio.

We were informed some time ago, by a friend at Washington, that a certain Secretary of the Navy, "which is neither here nor there," and a certain person much greater than the certain Secretary, had a terrible sparing about the expediency of using the torpedoes, invented by Mr. Fulton for the purpose of annoying the impudent British ships which come into our bays and harbours, notwithstanding the weight of metal opposed to them in the late proclamations. The Secretary, who has always been a gunboat man, was so provoked by the philosopher's declaration, that the submarine torpedoes of Mr. F. together with some ærial ones of his own invention, would effectually supersede the necessity of putting the nation to any further expense of building one-gun vessels, and of themselves be sufficient to liberate the seas from the tyranny under which they at present groan, that he, though generally a very meek man, furiously asserted that one gunboat was worth fifty torpedoes, and even went so far as to declare, that a single line of battleship would more effectually oppose an enemy at sea, than all the hundred thousand militia lately called from their repose, even though each one should be armed with a proclamation of the largest size, to be flourished about in the same manner that (as Mr. Barrow informs us) the Chinese soldiers perform their manual with their lanterns.*

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* "As we approached the city Tong-tchang-foo, we were much amused with a military manœuvre, which was evidently intended to astonish us. Under the walls of the city, about three hundred soldiers were drawn out in a line, which, however, the darkness of the night had rendered invisible. But just as we were coming to anchor, each soldier, at the sound of a gong, produced from under his cloak a splendid lantern, with which he went through a regular manual exercise."

Barrow's Travels in China.

Our friend has sent us the following copy of verses, as the production of one of those appendages of the press, which, from their smutty appearance, have obtained the elegant appellation of printer's devils.

The only reason we have to suppose it the production of one of those imps of literature, is the knowledge of the different sizes of types displayed at the conclusion; except, indeed, the pronunciation of *have* in the third line of the fifth stanza, which is given with the true Columbian accent. This errour we think the friend of Mazzei alluded to could not have fallen into, as we presume he knew that Walker authorised him to pronounce it "with the short sound of the *Italian a*." However, this is a point we don't pretend to determine, but leave it between the Devil and the P——.

J.

With Madison to oversee,
When I penn'd my Proclamation,
Then had I refused to be
Emperour of the Gallick nation.

S.

When you gunboats used to build,
And torpedoes were not thought of,
If a foe refus'd to yield,
Soon by douceurs was he bought off.

J.

See the British Squadron comes!
All asleep it is supposed—
Burst torpedoes! ocean foams!
And the squadron's "decomposed."

S.

D——n torpedoes all! say I;
Fulton and his nine-days wonder:
Line of battleships let's try;
Fire and faggot, blood and thunder!!

J.

Well but, Robert, how you rave!
Do not get in such a passion,
And more gunboats you shall have,
Gunboats still shall be the fashion.

S.

If so, through each Briton's heart
May your Proclamation strike a
Terrour, when he reads "DEPART
FROM OUR BAYS," in twelve line pica.

MERRIMENT.

When Fenelon was almoner to Louis XIV, his Majesty was astonished to find, one Sunday, instead of a numerous congregation, only him and the Priest. "What is the reason of this?" said the King. "I caused it to be given out Sire," replied he, "that your Majesty did not attend Chapel today, that you might know who came to worship God, and who to flatter the King."

—

When Captain Grose first went over to Ireland, his curiosity led him to see every thing in the capital worth seeing. In the course of his perambulations, he one evening strolled into the principal meat market of Dublin, where the butchers, as usual, set up their usual cry of "What d'ye buy? What d'ye buy?" Grose parried this for some time, by saying, he did not want anything. At last, a butcher starts from his stall, and eyeing Grose's figure from top to bottom, which was not much unlike the idea we form of Dr. Slop's, exclaimed, "Well sir, though you do not now want anything, only *say* you buy your meat of me, and you will make my fortune."

—

A poor man in Paris being very hungry, staid so long near a cook's shop, where they were dressing meat, that his stomach was actually satisfied by the smell of it. The cholerick cook demanded payment for his breakfast; the poor man refused; and the controversy was referred to the first man who should pass by. On the relation of the cause, he gravely decreed, that the man should jingle his money between two plates as long as he had staid, and thus pay the cook's *ears* for the benefit his *nose* had received.

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After the battle of Senef, which the great Conde had, 1664, against the Prince of Orange, he went to pay his respects to the King. Louis XIV, happening to be on the top of the staircase when the Prince was going up, who moved slowly on account of his gout, "I beg your Majesty's pardon," said he, "for making you wait." "Do not hurry yourself, cousin," replied the King, "no man can walk fast so covered with laurels as you are."

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A country paper mentions that a Miss *Legg* gave her *hand* to a Mr. *Grasp*.

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